Science diplomacy, science advice and research for development

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Workshop on science advice to governments

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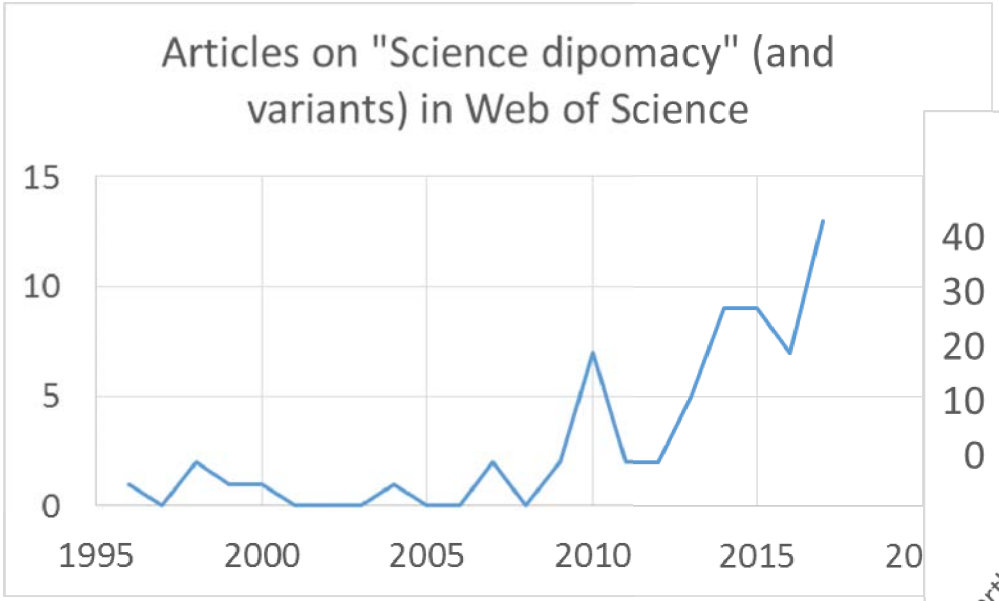
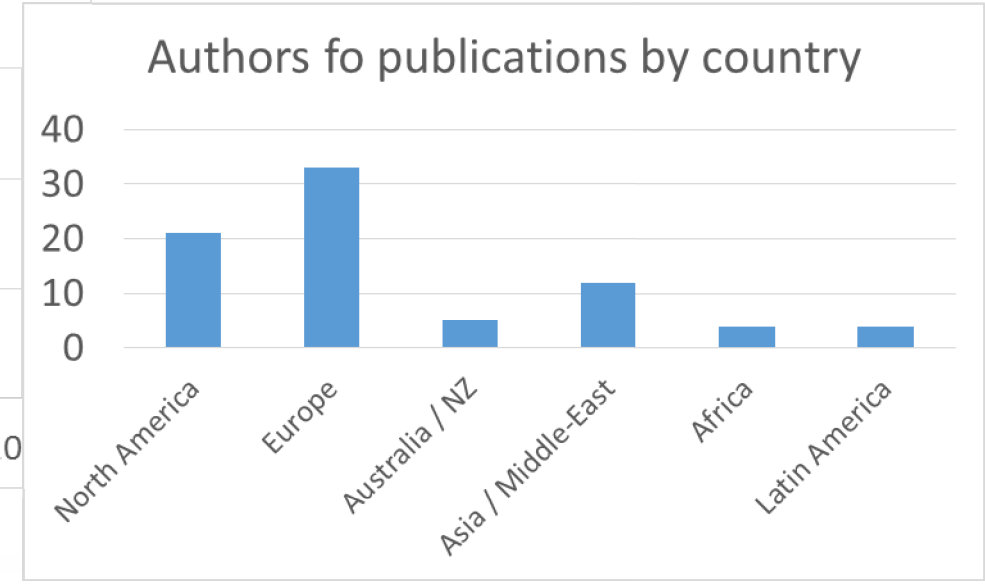
Outline

1. Context for science diplomacy: North, South and “research for development
2. The importance scientific capacity-building
3. Tackling shared development challenges
4. Innovating in how we collaborate

Thinking about science diplomacy: current context

- Science diplomacy is not new, but it is in the scholarly literature!
- The same could be said for science advice
- It still reflects a global North-South imbalance





From Cold War to SDGs

- Reducing tensions through collaborative science
- Special importance for countries like Canada → contributes to strategic positioning
- Special importance for organizations like ICSU
- Special importance for disciplines like oceanography, climate science, infectious disease, …
- The SDGs as a catalyst?

Photo: https://nsidc.org/cryosphere/arctic-meteorology/studying.html

Science diplomacy context

- It means different things to different people.

- Links to: **high-quality science**, **national / international organizations, and science advice.**

- ***So what can it mean for Africa?***
  - Access to research and resources?
  - Increased international geopolitical role?
  - Improved bilateral/multilateral relationships?

Source: wordclouds.com, from analysis of 2 NAS and Royal Society publications

IDRC Context

Canada's IDRC: Investing in solutions

Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) invests in *knowledge, innovation, and solutions* to improve the lives of people in the developing world.

IDRC program Focus

Agriculture and Environment
- Agriculture and food security
- Climate change
- Food, environment, and health

Inclusive Economies
- Employment and growth
- Governance and justice
- Maternal and child health
- Think Tank Initiative

Technology and Innovation
- Foundations for innovation
- Networked economies

- Individual capacity
- Organizational capacity
- Cutting-edge, collaborative research

Building science capacity (1)

- Individuals who can become leaders in academia and beyond
- Towards a more inclusive science: women and marginalized groups
- Focsusing on early-career
- Communication skills
- Opportunities to engage with policymakers (e.g., COP meetings)

Photo:
http://www.nexteinstein.org

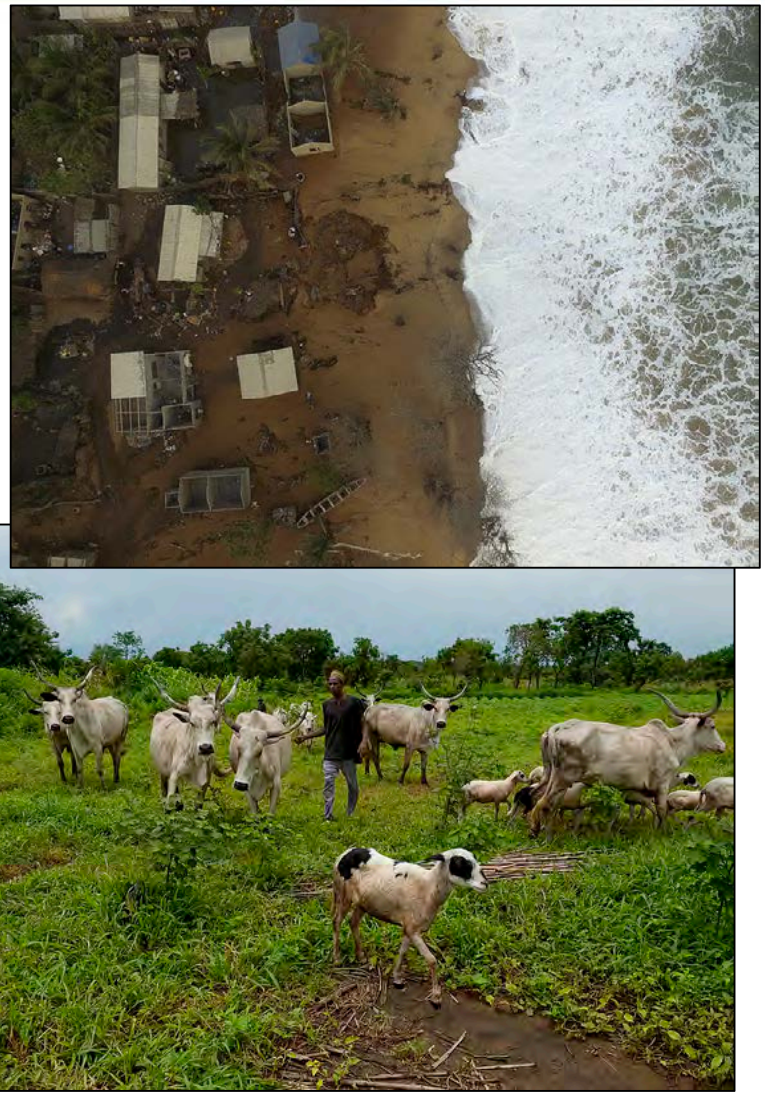
ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE FOR THE DEVELOPING WORLD

Building science capacity (2)

- Strengthening organizations for advancing science in-country and beyond
- Supporting international research consortia that operate at the science-policy interface
- Increasing demand for science and science advice (e.g., Think Tank Initiative and INGSA)

Tackling shared challenges

- Nationally-driven, but globally relevant
- Identifying research gaps in public and private funding
- Prioritizing issues such as inequality, violence against women, climate change resilience
- Scaling-up, scaling-out when it makes sense



Photos: IDRC.

New forms of collaboration

- Moving away from "knowledge transfer" partnerships
- Working with non-traditional partners in the public, private and non-governmental sectors
- Using infrastructure to strengthen relationships
- Being reactive and mobilizing the right partners quickly
- Global networks: Global Research Council, IAP, ICSU, etc.

Screenshot from scidev.net

Photo: IDRC

Putting the pieces together

- Setting national/regional research agendas
- Harnessing the SDGs to facilitate connections
- Science advice more than ever
- Innovative collaborations and open science
- Linking science academies, granting councils, research networks, etc.

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